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R 180810Z OCT 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9060
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC FOR POLAD
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Zimbley DATE 1/26/82
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8839

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE CANDIDATES: PLEIKU

REF : SAIGON6819

1. AS OF OCT. 13, FOURTEEN CANDIDATES REMAIN IN THE RACE FOR PLEIKU 3 LOWER HOUSE SEATS - 12 FOR THE 2 VIETNAMESE SEATS AND 2 FOR THE SINGLE SOUTH VIETNAMESE MONTAGNARD SEAT. TWO VIETNAMESE CANDIDATES TRAN VAN LUONG AND DO VAN DIEN, WERE REJECTED. BOTH ARE ARVN OFFICERS WHO WERE NOT GRANTED LEAVES OF ABSENCE. ONE MONTAGNARD, HIUPP, WAS REJECTED ON GROUNDS HE FILED LATE. TWO VIETNAMESE HAVE WITHDRAWN, HO THI THOM AND BUI HUU THANG.

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2. BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON ALL CANDIDATES REPORTED REFTEL. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON TWELVE REMAINING VIETNAMESE CONTENDERS FOLLOWS:

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A. PHAN NGOC NGUYEN, B. 25 APRIL 1925, THUA THIEN, CATHOLIC. 1950, GRADUATED FROM UNIVERSITY OF HUE; 1950-9, HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER IN HUE; 1958, GRADUATE FROM LAW SCHOOL OF UNIVERSITY OF HUE; 1959-63 WORKED IN LAND DEVELOPMENT CENTER PROGRAM IN THE HIGHLANDS; 1963-6, TEACHER MINH DUC HIGH SCHOOL IN PLEIKU; 1966-7, CHIEF OF RD CONTROL BOARD IN PLEIKU. AMERICAN ADVISORS CONSIDER NGUYEN LESS THAN FULLY EFFICIENT. NGUYEN IS CHAIRMAN OF THE CATHOLIC CITIZENS' BLOC COMMITTEE IN PLEIKU, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE PLEIKU COMMITTEE OF THE GREATER SOLIDARITY FORCES, AND LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF HUYNH VAN CAO'S UPPER HOUSE SLATE. HOWEVER CATHOLIC PRIESTS SAY THEY ARE NOT SUPPORTING HIS CANDIDACY.

B. TON THAT VIET HUNG, B. 14 OCT. 1932, THUA THIEN, BUDDHIST, ARVN CAPTAIN. FORMERLY A DISTRICT CHIEF IN TAY NINH PROVINCE; 1962-4, DISTRICT CHIEF IN LE TRUNG DISTRICT, PLEIKU; 1966-7, DEPUTY CHIEF OF II CORPS RD COUNCIL. AMERICAN ADVISORS ARE NOT CRITICAL OF CAPT. HUNG.

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C. LE VAN HAM, B. 29 JAN. 1927, QUANG NGAI, BUDDHIST. GRADUATE OF PELLERIN HIGH SCHOOL IN HUE; 1948-54 TEACHER IN QUANG NGAI AND ANTI-VIET MINH NATIONALIST; PROFESSIONAL POLICEMAN NOW SERVING AS CHIEF OF POLICE IN KONTUM PROVINCE. HAM IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NGUYEN HOA HIEP FACTION OF THE VNQDD.

D. THAN TRONG DUYET, B. 26 AUG. 1909, THUA THIEN, BUDDHIST. IN 1950'S, TEACHER AT A COMMERCIAL HIGH SCHOOL IN SAIGON; NOW BUSINESSMAN IN PLEIKU; 1965, ELECTED MEMBER OF PROVINCIAL COUNCIL; 1966, REPORTEDLY SYMPATHIZED WITH STRUGGLE.

E. NGUYEN DON LAM, B. 15 AUG. 1906, HAI DUONG, BUDDHIST. A BUSINESSMAN. SINCE 1927, HAS BEEN MEMBER OF VNQDD NOW AFFILIATED WITH NGUYEN HOA HIEP FACTION; CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN JAILED BY BOTH FRENCH AND DIEM; CAMPAIGNING JOINTLY WITH LE VAN HAM.

F. VO XUAN CHI, B. 1911, BINH DINH, NOMINAL BUDDHIST. BUSINESSMAN WHO HAS RESIDED IN PLEIKU SINCE 1946; CHIEF OF

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THE REGIONAL OFFICE OF VIETNAMESE VETERANS LEGION IN PLEIKU; 1965, ELECTED TO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AND A YEAR LATER CHOSEN ITS CHAIRMAN; 1967, ELECTED TO VILLAGE COUNCIL OF HOI THUONG-HOI PHU (DOWNTOWN PLEIKU); CAMPAIGN REPRESENTATIVE OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE NGUYEN VAN THIEU. CHI IS A SMALL TOWN POLITICIAN WHO

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WORKS WELL WITH GVN OFFICIALS AND IS ADEPT AT INGRATIATING HIMSELF WITH NEARLY EVERYONE.

G. VO VAN BA, B. 19 JAN. 1922, MY THO, BUDDHIST, ARVN LT. COL. HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION; 1956-7, ATTENDED ARMOR SCHOOL AT FORT KNOX; 1958-64, SECTOR COMMANDER AND LATER DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF FOR SECURITY IN PLEIKU; 1964-5, PROVINCE CHIEF OF PLEIKU; 1965-7, STAFF OFFICER TO GEN. NGUYEN HUU CO, MINISTER OF DEFENSE; 1967, WHEN CO WAS REMOVED BA SAYS HE WAS GIVEN UNIMPORTANT STAFF JOB IN IV CORPS HEADQUARTERS AT CAN THO. AMERICAN ADVISORS CONSIDERED BA A GOOD MILITARY OFFICER BUT POOR ADMINISTRATOR. HE IS WELL RESPECTED BY PEOPL IN PLEIKU FOR HAVING DONE A CREDITABLE JOB AS PROVINCE CHIEF. BA SEES NEED FOR REFORM OF ARVN AND GOVERNMENT, AND IS SOMEWHAT CRITICAL OF THIEU AND KY.

H. NGUYEN VAN SUU, B. 26 FEB. 1934, HANOI, PROBABLY BUDDHIST. FORMERLY CHIEF OF YOUTH SERVICE IN DALAT; 1966-67, CHIEF OF YOUTH SERVICE IN PLEIKU.

I. MISS L.E THI DIEP, B. 23 JAN. 1941, THU DAU MOT, BINH DUONG, CONFUCIANIST. 1966, GRADUATE OF SCHOOL OF PHARMACY OF SAIGON

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UNIVERSITY; 1966-7, PHARMACIST AT PLEIKU PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL. INTELLIGENT AND INDEPENDENT-MINDED YOUNG LADY WHO SHOWS SOME CONCERN FOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS BUT LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF CURRENT POLITICS.

J. TRAN VAN HAU, B. 4 OCT. 1929, QUANG TRI, BUDDHIST. CLAIMS TO HAVE STRUGGLED AGAINST FRENCH AND DIEM AND TO HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED BY BOTH. 1962, BECAME UNION WORKER IN LAM DONG; 1965,

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ARRESTED BY POLICE IN TUYEN UC FOR QUESTIONING ABOUT ALLEGED CONTACTS WITH VIET CONG BU[illegible] RELEASED WITHOUT BEING CHARGED; 1967, CHIEF OF NEWLY OPENED CVT OFFICE IN PLEIKU; REPRESENTATIVE OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PHAN KHAC SUU.

K. VO VAN HA, B. 3 MAR. 1934, BINH DINH, BUDDHIST. FROM FISHING FAMILY; CAME TO PLEIKU 1950 AS PF SQUAD LEADER; 1964, HAMLET CHIEF OF HAMLET NUMBER 2 IN PLEIKU CITY; 1965-7 APPOINTED DEPUTY VILLAGE CHIEF OF HOI THONG-HOU PHU VILLAGE (DOWNTOWN PLEIKU)

L. PHAM VAN PHU, B. 9 NOV. 1928, HUNG YEN, CATHOLIC. PHU HAS BEEN CIVIL SERVANT IN PLEIKU FOR SEVERAL YEARS;

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3. MOST OBSERVERS IN PLEIKU AGREE THAT COL. VO VAN BA WILL WIN ONE SEAT BUT ARE UNCERTAIN WHO WILL WIN THE SECOND. THE LEADING CONTENDERS ARE TON THAT VIET HUNG AND PHAM VAN PHU, WITH VO XUAN CHI AND LE THI DIEP AS POSSIBLE DARK HORSE WINNERS.

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE TWO SOUTHERN MONTAGNARD CANDIDATES FOLLOWS:

A. NAY BLIM, B. 4 JULY 1928, PHU BON, JARAI, RELIGION UNKN WN. ATTENDED NGUYEN DU HIGH SCHOOL IN BAN ME THUOT; 1950-66, WAS A FUNCTIONARY IN PLEIKU PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT RISING TO BECOME CHIEF OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE; 1966, ELECTED TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHERE HE SERVED WITHOUT DISTINCTION. BLIM IS OLDER AND MORE CONSERVATIVE, BUT AS HE IS THE BETTER KNOWN OF THE TWO CANDIDATES, MOST COMMENTATORS FEEL HIS VICTORY IS ASSURED.

B. RMAH DOCK, B. 1 MAR. 1942, PLEIKU, JARAI, PROTESTANT. GRADUATE OF ONE YEAR COUSE AT NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATION; FORMERLY A TEACHER; NOW FUNCTIONARY IN OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FOR II CORPS IN DALAT. A YOUNG, INTELLIGENT AND AGGRESSIVE MONTAGNARD WHO WILL PROBABLY DO BETTER THAN MOST OBSERVERS EXPECT.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9162
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8838

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: KIEN PHONG

REF: SAIGON 5945

1. OF THE NINETEEN CANDIDATES WHO ORIGINALLY FILED FOR THE TWO SEATS AT STAKE IN KIEN PHONG PROVINCE, SIX HAVE WITHDRAWN OR THEIR CANDIDATES WERE REJECTED. THEY ARE:

A. NGUYEN XUAN TRUONG, B. AUG 15, 1926, KIEN PHONG, CHAIRMAN OF PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, TRUONG IS MEMBER OF PHAM BA CAM'S HOA HAO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP). HE WITHDREW (AT CAM'S DIRECTION) IN PROTEST AGAINST CAM'S DEFEAT IN WHAT

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TRUONG TERMS DISHONEST UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS OF SEPT 3. HE SAYS LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS WIL ALSO BE TAINTED. TRUONG'S WITHDRAWAL WAS MOST PROBABLY COORDINATED WITH THOSE OF SDP CANDIDATES IN SEVERAL OTHER DELTA PROVINCES, NOTABLY CHAU DOC, AN GIAN, AND SA DEC.

B. HUYNH KHAI, B. SEPT 12, 1923, KIENPHONG FARMER. WITHDREW.

C. NGUYEN VAN BINH, B. 1917, KIEN PHONG, FARMER - INSUFFICIENT DOCUMENTATION.

D. PHAM BAO KIM, B. JAN 20, 1928 QUANG NAM, PRIVATE EMPLOUEE - INSUFFICEITN DOCUMENTATION.

E. NGUYEN DINH DUNG, MARCH 30, 1930, QUANG NGAI, MERCHANT - DISQUALIFIED UNDER ARTICLE II, SECTION 9 OF ELECTION LAW. HIS APPEAL TO CEC IN SAIGON WAS REJECTED.

F. NGUYEN VAN XUAN, B. AUG 30, 1940, SA DEC, ARVN OFFICER - INSUFFICIENT DOCUMENTATION.

2. LEADING CANDIDATES STILL IN THE RACE:

A. NGUYEN VAN THO, B. JULY 2, 1912, KIEN PHONG, CA REPRESENTATIVE. HOA HAO LEADING VOTE GETTER IN CA ELECTION.

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WAS THIEU-KY REPRESENTATIVE IN KIEN PHONG. CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE A LEADING CONTENDER, BUT MAY LOSE VOTES DUE TO FACT THERE IS PROFUSION OF OTHER HOA HAO CANDIDATES (EIGHT). THO MAY ALSO BE HURT BY WHAT MANY CONSIDER TO BE WIDESPREAD ADVERSE (AND SOMEWHAT IRRATIONAL) ATTITUDE OF DELTA POPULATION TOWARD CA DEPUTIES, NAMELY THAT THEY HAVE NOT KEPT TOUCH WITH PROVINCES AND HAVE NOT HELPED THEIR CONSTITUENTS. ACCORDING TO THIS THEORY, PEOPLE WANT "NEW FACES".

B. HUYNH VAN SANG, B. SEPT 8, 1921, KIEN PHONG, CHIEU HOI THINKS SANG IS SURE TO BE ELECTED.

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C. PHAM VAN NHE, B. DEC 17, 1915, KIEN PHONG, [redacted] ONLY CATHOLIC CANDIDATE IN KIEN PHONG. CONSIDRED TO BE ALMOST CERTAIN RECIPIENT OF [redacted] VOTE, AND MAY ALSO ATTRACT OTHER SUPPORT THROUGH CIVIL CONTACTS. UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES THIS WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH, BUT IF HOA HAO SPLIT VOTE, NHE'S CHANCES ARE GOOD.

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D. BUI VAN KIEU, B. AUG 20, 1917, KIEN PHONG CA DEPUTY, BUDDHIST, AND ONLY NON-HOA HAO MEMBER OF PROVINCE COUNCIL. WAS HUONG REPRESENTATIVE. WAS ACTIVE CA DEPUTY, STRONGLY ANTI-GVN AND REGARDED BY SOME AS SPOKESMAN FOR TRI QUANG BUDDHIST INTEREST. IS COOPERATING WITH HOA MAO RELATIE BUI VAN YEN (THZY RAN TOGETHER IN CA ELECTION) AND TYUS MUY PICK UP SOME HOA HAO VOTES.

E. BUI VAN YEN, B. JULY 11, 1919, KIEN PHONG, FARMER. HOA HAO. R
COOPERATING WITH KIEU. FORMER GENERAL SECRETARY OF KIEN PHONG HOA HAO ORGANIZATION.

F. TRUONG MY THANH, B. DEC 6, 1923, KIEN PHON •34:#-,T. HAS HELD SEVERAL POSITIONS IN HOA HAO ORGANIZATION. CONSIDERED STRONG CONTENDER 6 8, 173,58-) &3,34-) J3:4-5-46 9 049:8,:8-Ø :97,:8).

G. HUYNH VAN TU AKA HOANG HO. B. AUGUST 16, 1916, SA DEC, JOURNALIST, EDITOR OF PAPER "DETECTIVE." THOUGHT TO BE QUALIFIED, EDUCATED MAN (HAS STUDIED IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND), AND IS REPORTED TO HAVE STRENGTH IN KIEN VAN DISTRICT. POPULATION IN GENERAL UNFAMILIAR WITH HIM, HOWVER, SINCE HE IS LONG

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TIME SAIGON RESIDENT.

3. OTHER CANDIDATES IN THE RACE:

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PHAM CONG HOANH, B. FEB 2, 1916, KIEN PHONG, CANTON CHIEF;

LE QUANG LONG, B. JUNE 15, 1910, ' ONG XUYEN, CENSUS GRIEVANCE CADRE;

NGUYEN VAN BA, APRIL 8, 1930, KIEN PHONG, FARMER;

NGUYEN VAN KHUYEN, B. FEB 22, 1931, KIEN PHONG, FORMER CIVIL SERVANT. ONLY CAO DAI CANDIDATES;

PHAN VAN KIET, B. JULY 12, 1901, KIEN PHONG, FARMER;

NGUYEN VAN CU, MAY 29, 1930, KIEN PHONG, FARMER.

4. ELECTION OUTLOOK IN KIEN PHONG COMPLICATED WITH WIDELY VARYING OPINIONS ON CANDIDATES'S STRENGTH. OF 13 CONTENDERS, 9 ARE HOA HAO, 2 "INDEPENDENT" BUDDHISTS, ONE CATHOLIC AND ONE CAO DAI. DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHAT THE HOA HAO WILL DO, BUT RECENT PERFORMANCE SUGGESTS THEY WILL NOT AGREE. HOA HAO LEADERS IN KIEN PHONG DIFFER IN THEIR STATED OPINIONS OF VARIOUS CANDIDATES, WITH THO, SANG, THANH, YEN ALL MENTIONED AS POSSIBLE RECIPIENTS OF "THE" HOA HAO VOTE. IF HOA HAO VOTE BADLY SPLIT, CATHOLIC NHE AND BUDDHIST KIEN MAY HAVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO WIN.
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